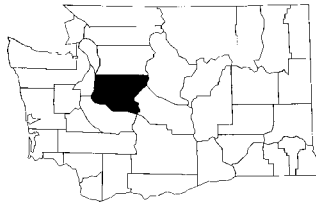


King County Hospitals



Health Care User's Guide

Hospital Charges By
Illness Category
January 1996 to December 1996

North Puget Sound Region



For Clallam, Island, Jefferson,
Kitsap, Pierce, San Juan, Skagit,
Snohomish, and Whatcom
Counties

Southwest Washington Region



For Clark, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor,
Klickitat, Lewis, Mason, Pacific,
Skamania, Thurston, and
Wahkiakum Counties

Central Washington Region



For Benton, Chelan, Douglas,
Franklin, Grant, Kittitas, Okanogan,
and Yakima Counties

Eastern Washington Region



For Adams, Asotin, Columbia,
Ferry, Garfield, Lincoln, Pend Oreille,
Spokane, Stevens, Walla Walla, and
Whitman Counties

North Puget Sound Hospitals

1996 Average Hospital Charges

North Puget Sound Residents Treated In North Puget Sound Hospitals:

Hospital Name	Stroke DRG 014	Pneumonia DRG 089	Heart Failure & Shock DRG 127	Chest Pain DRG 140	Digestive Disorders DRG 182	Joint Replacement & Limb Reattachment DRG 209	Medical Back Problems DRG 243	Cesarean Section DRG 371	Normal Childbirth DRG 373	Normal Newborn DRG 391	Chemo- Therapy DRG 410	Psychoses DRG 430
Affiliated Health Services	6,308	6,028	6,061	3,748	4,028	15,231	4,401	4,952	2,750	708	6,387	5,532
Allenmore Community Hospital	5,474	5,426	4,778	2,722	4,182	19,358	3,834	_____	_____	_____	4,837	5,040
Cascade Valley Hospital	5,787	4,382	4,500	3,034	3,468	14,451	4,134	5,012	2,330	567	_____	_____
Forks Community Hospital	5,880	4,666	5,320	1,990	6,212	_____	2,444	_____	2,150	315	_____	_____
Good Samaritan Hospital	6,435	4,983	4,705	2,980	4,286	15,971	4,079	5,300	3,055	772	7,238	3,973
Harrison Memorial Hospital	5,149	5,222	5,207	3,362	3,810	13,465	3,795	4,512	2,193	539	4,633	4,821
Island Hospital	5,089	5,845	4,836	3,124	3,610	16,264	3,314	6,659	2,362	713	6,490	3,493
Jefferson General Hospital	6,197	5,330	4,257	2,832	3,522	15,806	3,400	6,082	2,793	620	_____	2,377
Mary Bridge Childrens Hlth Cntr	10,875	_____	6,555	_____	_____	_____	4,096	_____	_____	723	6,715	_____
Olympic Memorial Hospital	5,289	5,294	5,028	2,503	3,403	14,070	2,927	4,643	2,116	739	3,576	2,855
Providence General Med Cntr	6,228	5,279	4,976	2,822	3,650	15,141	4,425	5,615	3,161	665	5,152	5,288
Puget Sound Hospital	6,523	6,961	7,863	5,291	5,153	13,929	4,280	_____	_____	_____	_____	6,431
Saint Clare Hospital	6,185	5,404	5,691	4,507	3,906	17,356	4,176	4,873	2,480	766	_____	_____
Saint Joseph Hospital	6,891	6,115	5,835	3,128	5,161	16,287	4,439	7,059	2,766	786	3,019	8,269
Saint Joseph Medical Center	6,686	5,775	6,043	3,769	4,941	16,292	4,901	5,910	2,421	805	7,469	3,048
Stevens Healthcare	6,851	5,592	5,047	2,443	3,919	12,524	3,452	4,440	2,394	521	6,500	5,476
Tacoma General Hospital	6,720	5,640	5,304	2,621	4,591	19,383	4,584	3,945	2,247	571	7,396	5,232
Valley General Hospital	5,328	4,208	4,658	3,165	2,463	15,208	2,637	6,048	2,473	876	_____	_____
Whidbey General Hospital	5,720	5,761	4,200	3,115	3,483	18,539	3,330	4,899	1,992	616	4,501	4,060
Region Averages	6,194	5,474	5,258	2,970	4,086	15,903	4,049	5,111	2,597	678	6,135	5,274

North Puget Sound Residents Treated In Other Regions:

King County Region`	7,183	5,804	5,889	3,124	4,765	14,142	4,706	4,499	2,470	635	6,361	7,404
Southwest Washington Region	6,327	7,120	6,679	3,428	4,202	14,791	6,990	6,053	2,890	637	_____	6,372
Central Washington Region	3,787	3,608	3,831	2,950	4,245	13,873	2,814	_____	2,574	760	_____	6,669
Eastern Washington Region	12,702	5,833	_____	_____	3,574	18,219	_____	_____	1,975	532	4,716	14,385
Averages for N. Puget Sound Residents	6,277	5,501	5,306	2,990	4,168	15,598	4,157	5,008	2,579	672	6,224	5,803
State Averages	6,224	5,842	5,432	3,177	4,191	15,027	4,182	4,926	2,521	678	6,289	6,491

NOTE: Values in *Italic* are based on less than 25 discharges.

King County Hospitals

1996 Average Hospital Charges

King County Residents Treated In King County Hospitals:

Hospital Name	Stroke DRG 014	Pneumonia DRG 089	Heart Failure & Shock DRG 127	Chest Pain DRG 140	Digestive Disorders DRG 182	Joint Replacement & Limb Reattachment DRG 209	Medical Back Problems DRG 243	Cesarean Section DRG 371	Normal Childbirth DRG 373	Normal Newborn DRG 391	Chemo- Therapy DRG 410	Psychoses DRG 430
Auburn Regional Medical Center	6,922	7,163	6,311	3,760	4,377	16,368	4,938	4,328	2,739	739	5,519	19,221
CPC Fairfax Hospital	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	9,885
Childrens Hospital & Medical Center	9,601	1,882	3,396	—	—	13,266	1,730	—	—	1,150	6,105	12,072
Community Memorial Hospital	4,222	5,861	4,838	3,066	3,601	15,219	4,363	5,501	2,454	621	—	—
Evergreen Hospital Medical Center	6,326	6,367	5,461	3,355	3,565	13,595	3,584	4,116	2,451	538	5,703	2,982
Harborview Medical Center	8,582	5,039	5,810	3,615	5,128	16,712	5,893	—	—	—	8,345	6,364
Highline Community Hospital	5,564	6,284	5,422	2,741	4,592	14,815	4,098	4,830	2,261	550	4,278	9,249
Northwest Hospital	5,604	5,503	4,501	2,437	4,102	14,208	3,638	4,153	2,294	543	5,650	9,825
Overlake Hospital Medical Center	5,887	5,459	5,459	3,317	3,674	14,343	3,303	3,827	2,424	707	3,283	3,638
Providence Seattle Medical Center	6,233	5,785	6,272	3,854	4,657	12,873	4,784	4,704	2,629	755	3,229	6,951
Regional Hospital for Complex Care	7,268	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Saint Francis Community Hospital	6,914	6,167	6,099	3,877	4,043	15,716	3,649	5,606	2,476	769	14,922	2,742
Snoqualmie Valley Hospital	5,313	5,968	4,243	—	2,351	11,250	1,533	6,723	3,653	550	—	—
Swedish Medical Center	6,885	6,177	6,477	4,700	4,542	12,721	4,373	4,857	2,653	740	4,896	5,920
THC-Seattle Hospital	4,014	2,601	2,555	—	12,672	15,707	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of Washington Medical Center	6,490	5,995	5,686	3,660	4,902	16,485	5,167	5,518	2,589	707	7,799	5,982
Valley Medical Center	6,008	5,239	4,523	2,640	3,275	12,701	3,934	4,158	2,202	499	8,398	4,040
Virginia Mason Hospital	6,395	5,681	5,114	3,229	4,693	14,729	3,712	4,858	2,461	686	6,795	6,374
Region Averages	6,353	5,844	5,580	3,456	4,282	13,697	4,300	4,481	2,462	653	5,469	6,119

King County Residents Treated In Other Regions:

North Puget Sound Region	5,866	4,837	5,031	3,160	3,624	14,785	5,017	4,641	2,533	696	8,393	6,318
Southwest Washington Region	6,305	5,057	6,193	4,260	4,807	16,301	3,585	6,231	2,828	522	—	4,880
Central Washington Region	6,229	4,501	5,843	2,345	1,286	13,514	4,341	—	2,274	820	—	7,474
Eastern Washington Region	9,823	4,266	4,808	2,779	—	—	8,092	—	2,281	—	—	11,776
Averages for King County Residents	6,333	5,807	5,569	3,444	4,262	13,736	4,333	4,487	2,464	655	5,581	6,153
State Averages	6,224	5,842	5,432	3,177	4,191	15,027	4,182	4,926	2,521	678	6,289	6,491

NOTE: Values in *Italic* are based on less than 25 discharges.

*Group Health Hospitals do not report charges to the Department of Health.

Southwest Washington Hospitals

1996 Average Hospital Charges

Southwest Washington Residents Treated In Southwest Washington Hospitals:

Hospital Name	Stroke DRG 014	Pneumonia DRG 089	Heart Failure & Shock DRG 127	Chest Pain DRG 140	Digestive Disorders DRG 182	Joint Replacement & Limb Reattachment DRG 209	Medical Back Problems DRG 243	Cesarean Section DRG 371	Normal Childbirth DRG 373	Normal Newborn DRG 391	Chemo- Therapy DRG 410	Psychoses DRG 430
Columbia Capital Medical Center	5,484	5,851	5,660	3,388	4,635	15,684	4,375	5,595	2,830	637	12,033	——
Grays Harbor Community Hospital	8,821	8,171	7,404	4,145	5,359	21,805	5,629	7,587	3,160	830	——	6,530
Klickitat Valley Hospital	3,944	5,108	3,961	3,259	3,321	——	2,751	7,906	2,596	625	——	2,022
Mark Reed Memorial Hospital	4,476	5,155	3,249	——	2,554	——	——	——	——	——	——	——
Mason General Hospital	4,463	4,710	4,241	3,021	3,526	14,072	3,636	4,976	2,541	536	3,941	——
Morton General Hospital	3,317	4,243	3,649	2,448	2,619	——	2,221	7,890	2,780	905	——	——
Ocean Beach Hospital	4,758	5,636	5,063	1,841	5,341	——	4,659	——	——	——	——	——
Providence Centralia Hospital	6,291	6,329	5,594	3,357	3,777	15,526	4,149	5,823	2,617	719	——	2,874
Providence Saint Peter Hospital	5,977	6,017	5,148	2,936	4,122	14,201	4,483	5,456	3,049	617	6,221	7,732
Saint Johns Medical Center	5,617	5,243	5,096	2,949	4,023	11,897	3,080	4,419	2,654	533	9,288	5,351
Skyline Hospital	6,174	6,895	5,256	3,530	3,422	——	3,595	7,386	2,917	608	——	——
Southwest Washington Medical Center	5,431	5,225	4,881	2,545	3,855	17,061	3,697	5,042	2,484	705	5,530	6,010
Willapa Harbor Hospital	5,873	5,313	4,409	2,651	2,404	——	——	7,114	2,465	880	——	——
Region Averages	5,884	5,765	5,395	3,073	4,049	15,125	3,971	5,430	2,727	664	6,718	6,560

Southwest Washington Residents Treated In Other Regions:

North Puget Sound Region	5,676	6,334	5,451	3,342	4,356	15,052	4,866	4,835	2,431	656	5,220	5,868
King County Region	6,368	8,127	6,624	5,216	4,189	14,838	5,779	5,696	2,926	792	6,943	8,508
Central Washington Region	5,892	7,098	5,282	2,551	3,019	15,921	5,384	5,296	2,067	746	——	10,057
Eastern Washington Region	7,507	7,326	——	——	5,239	——	3,422	——	2,411	787	——	18,431
Averages for Southwest Wash. Residents	5,889	5,796	5,414	3,088	4,063	15,105	4,080	5,406	2,719	664	6,631	6,744
State Averages	6,224	5,842	5,432	3,177	4,191	15,027	4,182	4,926	2,521	678	6,289	6,491

NOTE: Values in *Italic* are based on less than 25 discharges.

Central Washington Hospitals

1996 Average Hospital Charges

Central Washington Residents Treated In Central Washington Hospitals:

Hospital Name	Stroke DRG 014	Pneumonia DRG 089	Heart Failure & Shock DRG 127	Chest Pain DRG 140	Digestive Disorders DRG 182	Joint Replacement & Limb Reattachment DRG 209	Medical Back Problems DRG 243	Cesarean Section DRG 371	Normal Childbirth DRG 373	Normal Newborn DRG 391	Chemo- Therapy DRG 410	Psychoses DRG 430
Carondelet Behavioral Health Center	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	9,022
Cascade Medical Center	3,844	5,989	5,246	2,055	2,033	—	3,336	—	—	—	—	3,667
Central Washington Hospital	5,708	5,552	4,804	2,727	3,775	11,499	3,712	4,424	2,587	733	5,226	6,188
Columbia Basin Hospital	2,955	2,991	2,324	1,824	1,396	—	—	—	1,629	547	—	—
Coulee Community Hospital	3,608	4,876	3,875	4,280	2,627	—	—	6,716	1,762	466	—	1,893
Kadlec Medical Center	7,063	6,424	6,467	3,379	4,053	15,720	4,385	4,845	2,546	737	13,964	3,114
Kennewick General Hospital	6,151	6,394	5,595	3,073	4,605	16,077	4,542	5,163	2,578	796	7,093	9,328
Kittitas Valley Hospital	5,693	5,898	4,879	3,086	3,385	20,554	3,176	5,091	2,339	700	—	3,041
Lake Chelan Community Hospital	3,256	7,573	5,298	3,615	2,829	13,823*	3,827	7,698	2,898	663	—	6,216
Mid-Valley Hospital	3,924	4,745	2,856	2,696	2,275	14,852	2,792	5,173	2,488	558	—	2,149
North Valley Hospital	4,503	5,060	4,164	2,330	2,344	—	4,567	5,956	2,449	524	—	—
Okanogan-Douglas Hospital	4,752	6,498	4,551	2,582	2,721	18,080	3,607	4,861	1,912	512	—	3,462
Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital	5,318	7,103	5,376	3,020	4,456	16,660	5,047	6,366	2,220	691	2,617	3,203
Prosser Memorial Hospital	4,257	5,910	3,321	2,669	2,589	—	2,115	5,400	1,838	637	—	—
Providence Toppenish Hospital	6,365	6,087	5,878	2,726	4,263	10,166	3,403	4,136	1,723	677	—	1,745
Providence Yakima Medical Center	5,662	7,097	5,630	2,257	4,226	13,648	4,342	5,237	2,379	652	8,426	2,694
Quincy Valley Hospital	4,482	4,991	4,592	1,719	3,189	—	2,556	6,000	2,462	647	—	—
Samaritan Hospital	4,892	5,622	5,195	2,687	3,607	16,207	3,351	4,936	2,123	838	—	2,296
Sunnyside Community Hospital	4,718	6,200	4,844	3,201	3,130	12,929	3,420	4,753	2,064	659	—	1,680
Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital	5,544	6,027	5,071	3,322	4,022	14,306	4,127	4,967	2,578	779	7,013	7,719
Region Averages	5,589	6,123	5,209	2,905	3,810	14,199	3,943	4,960	2,400	729	9,653	7,645

Central Washington Residents Treated In Other Regions:

North Puget Sound Region	6,420	9,478	6,943	1,811	5,140	17,219	3,190	6,933	3,071	719	—	6,002
King County Region	8,560	7,093	7,782	3,663	4,990	14,386	5,721	4,043	2,664	603	6,617	7,245
Southwest Washington Region	13,943	5,814	2,991	2,806	2,753	20,079	—	—	3,079	663	—	6,600
Eastern Washington Region	6,683	5,931	6,226	3,575	5,018	17,342	5,146	4,723	1,943	606	7,454	10,450

Averages for Central Wash. Residents **5,704** **6,138** **5,260** **2,934** **3,868** **14,335** **4,107** **4,949** **2,395** **725** **7,853** **7,767**

State Averages **6,224** **5,842** **5,432** **3,177** **4,191** **15,027** **4,182** **4,926** **2,521** **678** **6,289** **6,491**

NOTE: Values in *Italic* are based on less than 25 discharges.

*Charges include the administering of anesthesia.

Eastern Washington Hospitals

1996 Average Hospital Charges

Eastern Washington Residents Treated In Eastern Washington Hospitals:

Hospital Name	Stroke DRG 014	Pneumonia DRG 089	Heart Failure & Shock DRG 127	Chest Pain DRG 140	Digestive Disorders DRG 182	Joint Replacement & Limb Reattachment DRG 209	Medical Back Problems DRG 243	Cesarean Section DRG 371	Normal Childbirth DRG 373	Normal Newborn DRG 391	Chemo- Therapy DRG 410	Psychoses DRG 430
Dayton General Hospital	4,455	5,963	4,091	1,717	4,432	—	2,514	—	—	—	—	—
Deaconess Medical Center	7,655	7,298	7,454	4,078	5,123	17,783	5,059	5,230	2,471	744	10,175	—
Deer Park Health Center & Hospital	2,941	4,652	4,664	1,825	3,511	—	2,600	—	2,705	492	—	—
East Adams Rural Hospital	6,149	6,448	4,148	2,103	3,920	—	2,419	—	—	—	—	2,355
Ferry County Memorial Hospital	4,439	3,684	3,156	2,367	2,573	—	1,595	5,750	1,893	878	—	1,853
Garfield County Memorial Hospital	3,516	5,721	3,990	—	—	—	2,105	—	—	—	—	—
Holy Family Hospital	6,009	6,246	4,958	3,055	4,401	17,180	3,737	5,333	2,287	607	6,032	2,528
Lincoln Hospital	5,750	5,339	5,473	2,851	2,726	—	4,616	6,489 ⁺	2,288	780	—	—
Mount Carmel Hospital	5,375	5,829	5,609	4,012	4,004	20,179 ⁺	3,799	6,065 ⁺	2,001	643	—	1,438
Newport Community Hospital	4,858	5,314	3,803	3,148	2,871	—	2,853	5,757	2,005	614	—	—
Odessa Memorial Hospital	1,808	4,190	3,048	—	2,337	—	2,516	—	—	—	—	3,285
Othello Community Hospital	3,691	4,727	2,817	3,538	1,994	—	3,420	4,602	1,785	575	—	—
Pullman Memorial Hospital	5,137	5,711	5,037	5,254	4,443	19,529	3,344	5,572	2,021	408	—	1,814
Sacred Heart Medical Center	7,265	6,928	5,857	3,631	5,353	16,141	4,782	4,739	2,680	751	6,792	9,075
Saint Josephs Hospital of Chewelah	5,188	6,356	4,676	3,250	3,046	—	2,974	7,705	2,537	762	—	2,250
Saint Mary Medical Center	6,474	7,422	6,543	4,447	5,503	17,796	4,859	6,056	2,117	756	7,764	4,919
Tri-State Memorial Hospital	7,043	7,954	6,060	4,363	4,266	15,646	1,933	—	—	—	7,730	3,909
Valley Hospital & Medical Center	8,053	7,011	7,074	3,583	5,519	17,873	4,735	6,295	2,826	747	7,258	—
Walla Walla General Hospital	7,648	8,488	7,402	5,636	4,537	16,766	4,833	5,388	2,293	811	—	3,214
Whitman Community Hospital	3,983	5,090	3,361	1,657	2,354	14,039	2,426	5,757	2,227	684	—	2,071
Region Averages	6,808	6,519	5,718	3,531	4,576	16,998	4,095	5,376	2,442	704	7,726	8,646

Eastern Washington Residents Treated In Eastern Washington Hospitals:

North Puget Sound Region	8,313	5,412	3,161	—	—	16,744	—	—	2,654	464	—	6,079
King County Region	4,125	5,539	5,567	—	5,429	15,301	2,414	5,560	2,967	506	9,369	5,446
Southwest Washington Region	4,915	3,588	—	5,481	2,986	—	—	—	—	—	—	4,546
Central Washington Region	5,077	4,381	4,931	3,441	2,607	14,296	2,344	4,488	2,262	757	—	9,013

Averages for Eastern Wash. Residents	6,792	6,492	5,702	3,537	4,551	16,898	4,068	5,361	2,438	705	7,889	8,611
State Averages	6,224	5,842	5,432	3,177	4,191	15,027	4,182	4,926	2,521	678	6,289	6,491

NOTE: Values in *Italic* are based on less than 25 discharges.

*Charges include the administering of anesthesia.

Illness Category Definitions

DRG 14: Stroke Stroke and related conditions, such as bleeding in the brain and sudden blockage of blood vessels in the brain.

DRG 89: Pneumonia Age 18 or older with complications. Bacterial, viral, and bronchial pneumonia and pleurisy.

DRG 127: Heart Failure & Shock Conditions related to weakening heart muscles as a result of high blood pressure, rheumatic heart disease, and congestive heart failure.

DRG 140: Chest Pain Severe pain related to a heart condition.

DRG 182: Digestive Disorders Age 18 or older with complications. Conditions related to the esophagus, stomach, and intestines, such as salmonella, food poisoning, infectious diarrhea, intestinal parasites, persistent vomiting, heartburn, gas and abdominal pain.

DRG 209: Joint Replacement & Limb Reattachment Major lower joint replacements such as knees, hips, ankles; and major lower limb reattachments, such as foot and lower leg.

DRG 243: Medical Back Problems Non-surgical treatments for back pain resulting from disease, injury or malformation, such as disc displacement, lumbago, sciatica, scoliosis, fractures, dislocations, and sprains.

DRG 371: Cesarean Section Normal delivery of a baby or babies through incisions made in the mother's abdomen.

DRG 373: Normal Childbirth Normal delivery of a baby or babies without surgery.

DRG 391: Normal Newborn Newly delivered babies without significant health problems.

DRG 410: Chemotherapy Maintenance and follow-up drug treatments for cancer.

DRG 430: Psychoses Major personality disorders such as schizophrenia, catatonia, manic disorders, bipolar affective disorders, and paranoia.

Note:

The information in this brochure comes from data provided to the state Department of Health by Washington hospitals. The data are grouped into illness categories, called Diagnosis Related Groups, or DRGs. They combine similar diagnoses and treatments.

The charges listed are **averages** for items and services provided by hospitals, based on the number of patients and total charges for that illness as reported in the region in 1996. **Doctor fees are not included.** Figures include charges for the hospital room, hospital services ordered by a doctor (such as x-rays and laboratory tests), and personal care items (such as hospital gowns). Very high or low charges and very long or short stays are not included in the averages.

Because these figures are averages, they may be different from what you are billed.

Making Informed Choices

This brochure can help you make informed health care choices. It is designed to show how health care charges for similar illnesses can vary by hospital. By using this information to let your health care providers know you plan to take an active role, you can make them more aware of the need for affordable, readily available care.

The information in this brochure comes from data provided to the Department of Health by Washington hospitals. This data is grouped into illness categories which combine similar diagnoses and treatments. There is a brief description of each category on the inside.

The charges in this brochure are **averages** based on the number of patients and total charges for that illness as reported in that region in 1996. How long you are in the hospital, the level of care you receive, complications, special laboratory services, and fee increases all affect the charges for hospital services. Because these figures are averages, they may be different from what you are billed.

Use this information to talk with your doctor about how to get the best care while keeping costs down.

For additional brochures:

1-360-236-4200
or visit: www.doh.wa.gov/publicat/publications.htm

Complaints about quality of care:

Hospitals: 1-800-633-6828
Professional Licensing: 1-360-586-4561

Health Consumer Assistance:

1-800-525-0127

Washington State

Department of Health

Office of Hospital & Patient Data Systems
P.O. Box 47811
Olympia, WA 98504-7811

Health Care Tips

Take Responsibility for Your Health

Play an active role in the health care of yourself and your family. Be prepared for doctor visits. Don't wait for a medical emergency to compare hospital or physician fees and services.

Plan. Choose an insurance plan that best meets your needs. Select doctors and hospitals you trust, that work with your insurance provider and are reasonably priced.

Know your rights and responsibilities as a patient. Know your personal and family medical history.

Learn about your illness or condition. Gather information about the latest treatments and alternatives to surgery.

Act. Don't wait. Look into alternatives. Speak up. Tell your doctor about your symptoms and what you think may be causing them.

Ask Questions

You have the right to be involved in your care and treatment. Have questions ready ahead of time to ask your doctor, insurance representative, and the hospital:

- What do my symptoms mean?
- What tests do I need and why do I need them?
- What risks are involved if I have surgery?
- How long does the surgery take and how long do I need to stay in the hospital?
- How much of the cost will my insurance cover?
- What items and services are included in the hospital charges?
- How soon can I return to my normal activities?

Avoid Unnecessary Treatment

Your doctor's decisions about your care can account for as much as three-quarters of your medical bills. You can save time and money by seeking the best treatment for your needs. You can be more confident of your treatment and reduce unforeseen costs if you choose a good insurance plan, use preferred providers, and get second opinions. Find out your options by asking questions such as:

- Is surgery or medication necessary? Why?
- Can my tests or surgery be done somewhere besides the hospital?
- What other treatments are available?
- Can I make any changes, such as diet and exercise, that might help my condition?

Prevent Injuries and Illness

The best way to avoid medical treatment is to practice preventive care and create safe home and work environments.

- Get regular check-ups and physical exams.
- Take free health tests when they are available.
- Schedule the health screening tests recommended for your age, sex, and risk group.
- Select an insurance plan with good preventive care coverage.
- Wear a seat belt.
- Never drink and drive.
- Eliminate unsafe conditions at home and at work.
- Keep guns locked up.
- Install smoke detectors and fire extinguishers.
- Wear sunscreen.

Develop a Healthy Lifestyle

Another way to avoid illness is to develop lifelong habits that keep you healthy.

- Don't smoke.
- Limit the amount of alcohol you drink.
- Exercise regularly.
- Eat a balanced diet that is low in fat and high in fiber.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Stay mentally active and involved with self, family and community.
- Keep a sense of humor about life.

Examine Hospital and Medical Bills

Check all medical bills carefully for errors. Look to see if you have been overcharged, billed more than once, or charged for an item or service you did not receive. If you have trouble understanding your bill, ask your doctor or the hospital for an explanation. **Washington Department of Health does not regulate hospital rates or billing practices.**

Washington State Department of Health

Office of Hospital & Patient Data Systems

P.O. Box 47811

Olympia, WA 98504-7811

This brochure is published to increase consumer awareness of health care charges. For additional copies write to the Department of Health at the address above or call 360-236-4200.